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NOTES ON LITTLE KNOWN SPECIES OF
SOUTH AMERICAN BIRDS WITH
DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW
SUBSPECIES

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NOTES ON LITTLE KNOWN SPECIES OF SOUTH AMERICAN BIRDS WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW SUBSPECIES.

BY CHARLES B. CORY.

Nyctipolus hirundinaceus hirundinaceus (Spix.).

Caprimulgus hirundinaceus Spix, Av. Brasil, II, 1825, p. 2, pl. iii, fig. 1, ("in sylvis fl. Solimoens").

Nyctipolus hirundinaceus Oberholser, Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., No. 86, 1914, p. 97 in text.

The history of this little known species may be briefly stated as follows:

Spix described the bird which he claimed to have taken "*in sylvis fl. Solimoens*," the old name for that part of the Amazon River from the mouth of the Rio Negro to the Marañon and Ucayali. The type specimen is still preserved in Munich, and according to Hellmayr*, it is labeled "*Caprimulgus hirundinaces* Sp. Amazon Str. Spix." For many years it was considered to be the same as *Chordeiles acutipennis* (Bodd.), the name being included in the synonymy of that species, but in 1906 Hellmayr (l.c.) corrects the error and states that it is a well-marked species which approaches nearest to *Setopagis parvulus* (Gould), and in addition to Spix's type he examined three skins from the Vienna Museum (which were purchased by Natterer in 1840 from dealers in London and Liverpool, and labeled "Bahia") and (in footnote) says he also examined a series of specimens of this species which were collected by Reiser in Bahia and Piahy, and that the Tring Museum possesses a specimen which undoubtedly came from Bahia. He therefore concludes that there is no doubt the species is an inhabitant of eastern Brazil and that the type locality given by Spix is wrong.

In addition to a very full description of the type specimen Hellmayr gives an illustration of the four outer primaries and according to both illustration and description, the three outer primaries have no white on the outer webs.

* Abh. k. Bayer. Akad. Wiss., Munchen, XXII, 1906, p. 636

The Field Museum collection contains ten specimens from the State of Ceara and three from the State of Bahia, which are subspecies of *N. hirundinaceus*, and the specimens from Ceara are nearer in general coloration to Spix's colored plate of the species than those from Bahia. Accepting without question that the illustration and description of the white markings on the outer primaries of the type specimen, as given by Hellmayr, is correct, we have three well-marked forms, which may be recognized at once by the different white markings on the outer primaries, and birds from Ceara also differ from Bahia specimens in somewhat paler coloration, the belly more rufous (especially in females), and the decidedly less strongly banded lower belly and ventral region. In *N. hirundinaceus hirundinaceus* (Spix) there is no white on the outer webs of (at least) the first and second outer primaries. In *N. h. crissalis* (Cory) only the outer primary has the outer web without a white patch, the second primary has the white bar on both webs, but the shaft is black. In birds from Ceara all the outer primaries have the white patch extending across both webs and the shafts of the feathers in the white areas are white (not black). These differences (although the white areas vary somewhat in shape and size) are constant in all the ten specimens from Ceara and in the three from Bahia. The form from the Province of Ceara being undescribed, I propose to name it—

***Nyctipolus hirundinaceus cearae* subsp. nov.**

Type from Quixada, Ceara, Brazil. Male, No. 47170, Field Museum of Natural History. Collected by Robert H. Becker, June 20, 1913.

Similar to the male of *N. h. crissalis* Cory, but the general plumage somewhat paler, the belly more rufous (especially in females), and the black bands on the lower belly narrower and less distinctly marked; all outer primaries with white band crossing both webs, the shafts of the feathers in the white areas being white.

Wing, 120; tail, 90 mm.

We have therefore three forms:

- (1) *N. h. hirundinaceus* (Spix). Type locality? Upper Amazon?
- (2) *N. h. crissalis* (Cory). Type locality Rio de Peixe, near Queimados, Bahia.
- (3) *N. h. cearae* Cory. Type locality Quixada, Ceara.

There seems to be a gradual regional diminution in extent of the white markings on the primaries of this species from north to south. In specimens from Ceara the white areas are most pronounced. In those from the interior of Bahia they are less so, and from the fact

that Hellmayr has seen specimens from "Bahia" which agree with Spix's type in the absence of white on three outer primaries, it would seem logical to assume that it came from a region still farther south, possibly from the vicinity of Ouro Preto in southern Minas Geraes (where Spix stayed for about two months from the last of February until May, 1818) or from the region of Rio de Janeiro (Spix, July to December, 1817) or Ypanema or S. Paulo (Spix, January, 1818).



Four outer primaries of:

1. *Nyctipolus hirundinaceus hirundinaceus* (Spix), from drawing and description of Spix's type given by Hellmayr (i.c.).
2. *Nyctipolus h. crissalis* (Cory). Shafts of feathers in white areas black.
3. *Nyctipolus h. cearae* Cory. Shafts of feathers in white areas white.

Setopagis (Caprimulgus) parvulus (Gould) may be distinguished at a glance from any of the forms of *S. hirundinaceus* by its darker plumage and the conspicuous black and white (sometimes black and buff) scapulars (see Hellmayr, i.c., Tab. 2). The pattern of the white markings on the primaries approaches nearest to that of *S. h. crissalis* but in *parvulus* these areas are much larger and two specimens from Matto Grosso (♂ and ♀) have two buff spots on the inner web of the outer primary instead of one white one. In addition to other characters males of *S. parvulus* have a patch of white on the ends of four outer tail feathers instead of on only the two outer feathers as in *N. hirundinaceus* (see Hellmayr, i.c., p. 637, illustrations).

Although generically distinct from *Chordeiles acutipennis*, *N. hirundinaceus* has a superficial resemblance to that species, but in addition to many other differences the conspicuously longer wing (wing of *C. acutipennis* averaging 35 mm. longer than that of *N. hirundinaceus*) will distinguish it at a glance.

Speotyto cunicularia grallaria (Temminck).

Judging from Temminck's description and plate * and the unsatisfactory description by Spix ** the type of *S. grallaria* approaches nearest in size and coloration to specimens of *Speotyto* from Sao Paulo, Brazil. Birds from that region have the front and sides of the tarsus fully feathered (as shown in Temminck's plate) but not nearly so thickly as in birds from Argentina and Chile, and decidedly less sparsely feathered than in birds from Bahia. Hellmayr † examined a specimen supposed to have been secured by the Spix expedition and labeled "*Athene grallaria* Tem. *Cunicularia* L. (?) Brazilien," and he states that while it approached nearer to birds from the Rio Verde (Minas Geraes) than to those from Ypiranga, Sao Paulo, it differed in some ways from both. There appears to be no certainty as to where the supposed Spix specimen was taken, or, in fact, that it represented true *S. grallaria*, and as the type of that species seems to have been lost, I propose "Minas Geraes" (the first locality mentioned by Spix) as the type locality for *grallaria*. The type localities and supposed distribution of the southeastern and southern forms of *S. cunicularia* will therefore be as follows:

Speotyto cunicularia cunicularia (Molina). (Chile) Tarsus thickly feathered (except at the back); dark markings paler; wing (females) averaging 184; tail averaging about 93 mm. Range: Chile, Argentina, Patagonia, and Uruguay.

Speotyto cunicularia grallaria (Temminck). (Minas Geraes, Brazil) Tarsus fully feathered (except at the back) but decidedly less thickly than in *S. c. cunicularia*; brown markings darker; wing (females) averaging 175, tail about 82 mm. Range: Southern Brazil (Minas Geraes, Sao Paulo, Parana, and perhaps somewhat farther south) and Paraguay.

Speotyto cunicularia beckeri Cory. (Sao Marcello, Rio Preto, Bahia, Brazil) Tarsus very sparsely feathered, the lower portion being practically bare; brown markings decidedly darker than in *S. c. grallaria* and heavier and more extensive below; forehead white (width about 7 mm.); wing (females) averaging about 168, tail about 75 mm. Range: Bahia and probably Goyaz and Paiuhi and perhaps farther north and west.

Scardafella squammata cearae subsp. nov.

Type from Quixada, Ceara, Brazil. Adult male, No. 45330, Field Museum of Natural History. Collected by R. H. Becker, June 21, 1913.

* Pl. Col. ii, 1822, pl. 146.

** Av. Bras., i, 1824, p. 21.

† Abh. k. Bayer. Akad. Wiss., Munchen, XXII, 1906, p. 574.

Similar to *S. s. squammata* from Bahia, with bases of outer webs of outer primaries without rufous, but breast and throat paler and shading to white on upper throat; chin pure white.

Wing, 95; tail, 103; bill, 12 mm.

Scardafella r. brasiliensis Beebe (Zoologica, I, No. 1, 1907, p. 21) comes very close to being a *nomen nudum*, although he had but *one* Brazilian specimen (from Bahia) and scattered throughout the paper are various references to it, including measurements (in the table of measurements) and a plate; but luckily the question of nomenclature is not important, as the supposed type being from Bahia the name is antedated by *S. squammata squammata* (Lesson).

***Leptoptila ochroptera approximans* subsp. nov.**

Type from Serra Baturite, Ceara, Brazil. Female, No. 46922, Field Museum of Natural History. Collected by R. H. Becker, July 19, 1913.

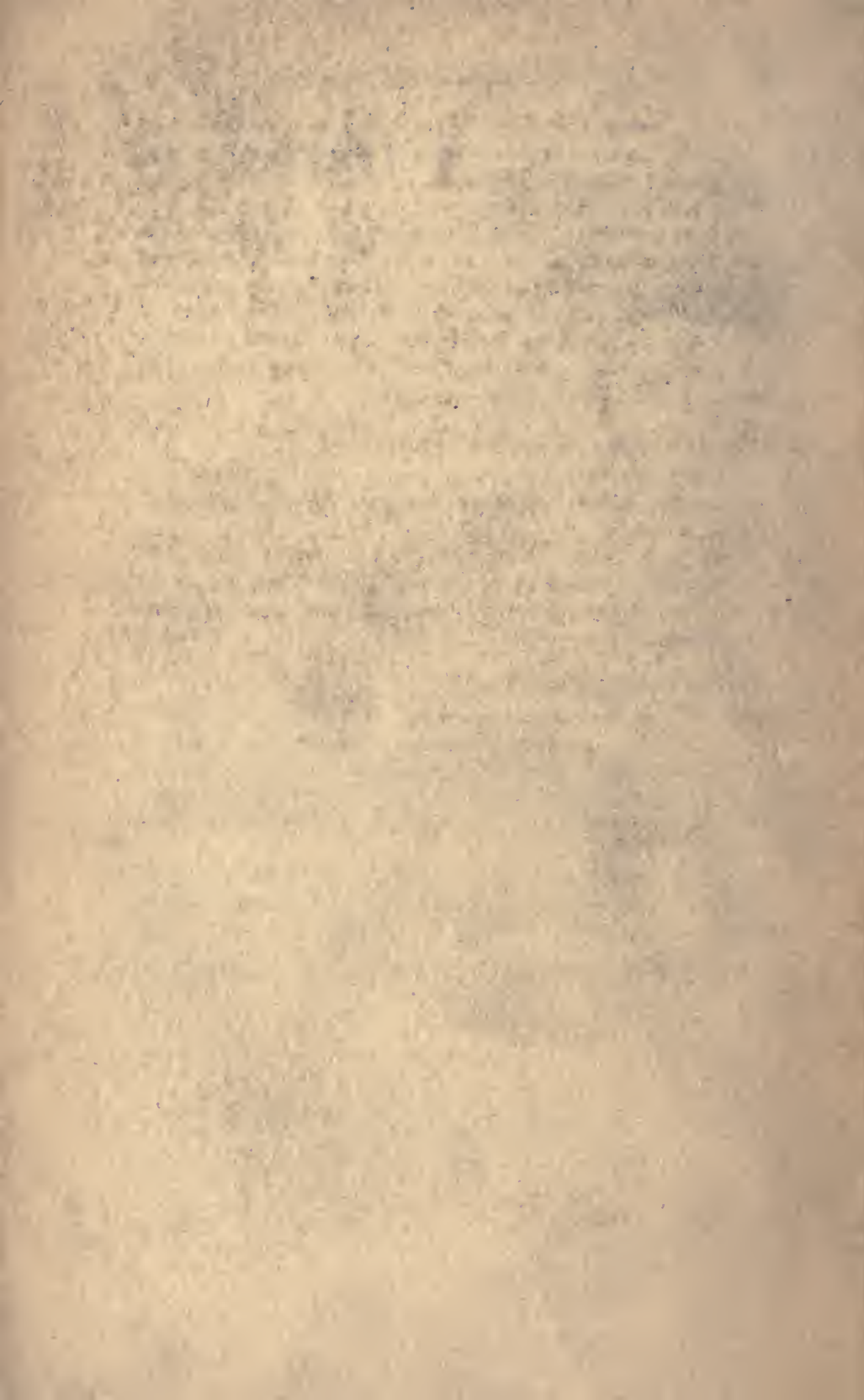
Similar to *L. o. ochroptera* of southern and eastern Brazil, but differs chiefly in its much more pale brown (almost vinaceous brown and not at all olive) back, rump, and upper tail coverts. Size about that of females of *L. o. ochroptera*.

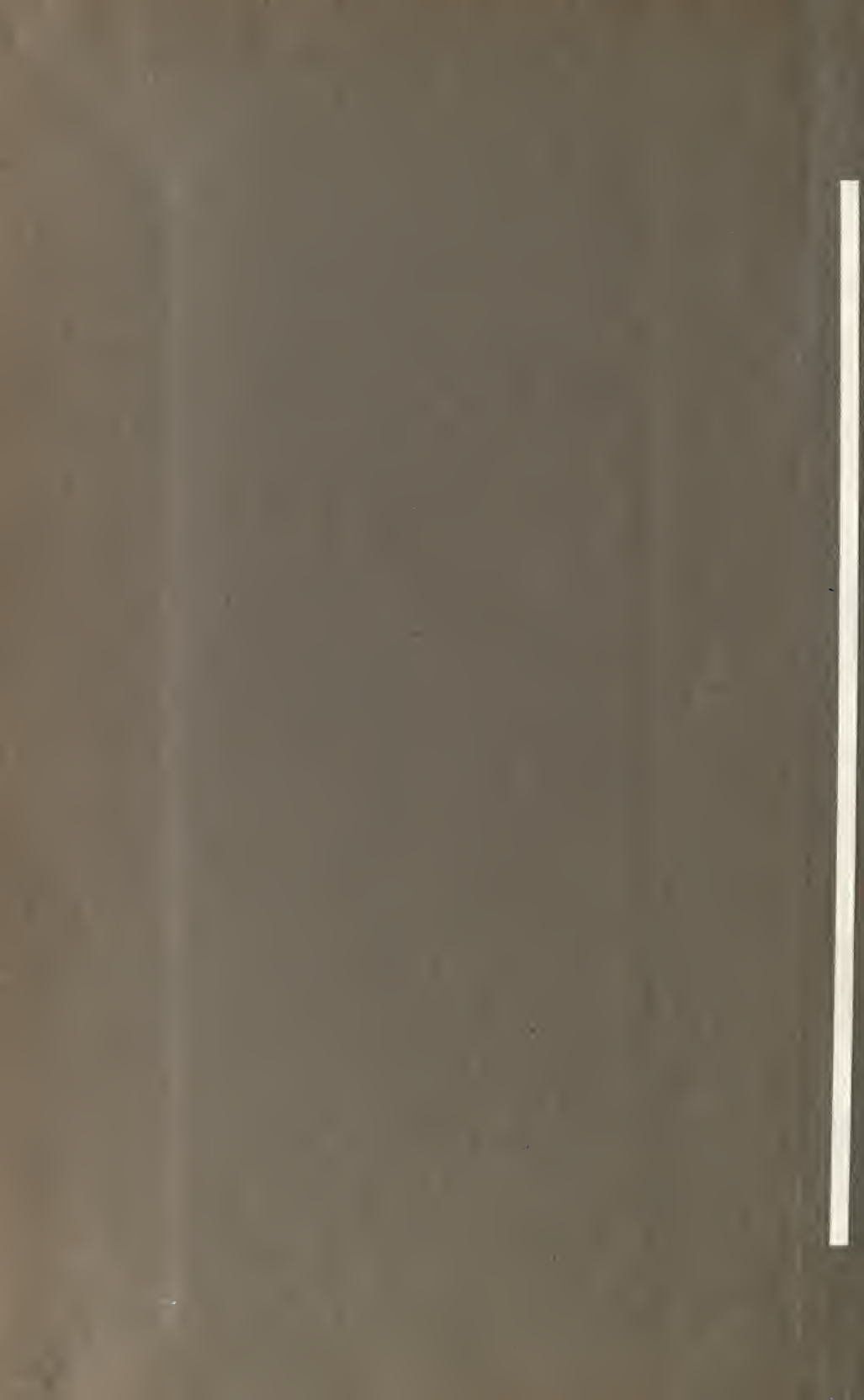
Piaya cayana venezuelensis* Cory

This form is apparently restricted to the low heavily forested region south of Lake Maracaibo in western Venezuela, and is readily distinguished from *P. c. columbiana* by its chestnut bay upper parts and generally darker coloration and from *P. C. cayana* by the conspicuous rusty brown coloration on the under surface of the rectrices and other differences.

Reference to the difference in coloration of the under surface of the rectrices was inadvertently omitted in my original description of the subspecies when comparing it with *P. c. cayana*.

* Described in Field Mus. Pub., No. 167, Orn. Ser. 1, 1913, p. 284 (Orope, Venezuela).





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